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— Volume xxi. of the 'Encyclopaedia Britannica,' which has just been issued, contains several distinctively philosophical articles. They are 'Rousseau,' by George Saintsbury; 'Scepticism,' by Andrew Seth; 'Schelling,' by Professor Adamson; 'Schleiermacher,' by Rev. J. F. Smith; 'Scholasticism,' by Andrew Seth; and 'Schopenhauer,' by Prof. William Wallace.

— Every once in a while some new hint is dropped concerning the forthcoming biography of Darwin by his son. The last is that Professor Huxley will contribute a chapter, and that the book will bear strong testimony to the influence exercised by Sir Charles Lyell over Darwin.

— Professor Tyndall's stay in Switzerland has greatly benefited his health, and he now intends to deliver the Christmas lectures at the Royal institution in London himself.

— Dr. Köhler has been succeeded as director of the German school at Athens by Dr. Peters, late professor of archeology at the University of Prague.

— The programme of the Aristotelian society of London for the winter is unusually interesting. Mr. Shadworth Hodgson opened the year's work with an address on the re-organization of philosophy. Other papers will treat of Malebranche, Leibnitz, Lotze, T. H. Green, Hegel's 'Philosophie des rechts,' and the Augustinian philosophy. Dr. Cattell of Leipzig will give an account of some recent psycho-physical researches. The ancient distinction of logic, physic, and ethic, the relation of language to thought, the distinction of fact and right, and the theory of motion, will be treated by other members of the society; and the session will be closed by Dr. Bain, 'On the ultimate questions of philosophy.'

— A new encyclopaedia of education is being prepared in England under the editorship of Mr. A. Sonnenschein and Rev. E. D. Price.

— Capt. R. L. Pythian, U.S.N., was ordered to duty on Nov. 14, as superintendent of the naval observatory at Washington. Commander A. D. Brown, who has been acting as superintendent, will continue on duty at the observatory as assistant superintendent.

— Herbert H. Smith, who has been collecting natural history specimens in South America for several years, left Rio de Janeiro for this country over a month ago upon a sailing-vessel. He brings with him enormous collections.

— The number of those who are now invalids as the result of the war is said to be 265,854, the total number of soldiers having been about one million and a quarter.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

### The swindler at work again.

I ENCLOSE for the benefit of others a letter from a swindler in the west, addressed to me, over the very well forged signature of Charles D. Walcott, U. S. N. M. (national museum at Washington), dated simply 'Cook co. Normal, Nov. 7, 1886.' Chicago is in Cook county, Ill. It requested the immediate despatch of a set of geological reports to Prof. George Wells Litz, of the Cook county (Ill.) normal school, and his colleague, Professor Parker.

Cook co. Normal, Nov. 7, 1886.

Prof. JOHN P. LESLEY.

Dear Sir,— Will you kindly send to Prof. George Wells Litz, of the Cook county (Ill.) normal school, a complete set of the reports of the second geological survey of Pennsylvania. I am indebted to him, and to his colleague Professor Parker, for a most delightful Sunday, and wish to place him and his friend in the way of getting literature at present inaccessible to them.

An early compliance with this request will be considered a great favor, and one to be soon repaid by your friend, CHARLES D. WALCOTT, U.S.N.M.

Mr. Walcott informs me by letter, after seeing the above letter, that he had tried to trace the rascal, but thus far without success. The fellow has obtained, under various false pretences, quantities of specimens, books, and sometimes money, from eastern geologists.

J. P. LESLEY.

### Effect of electric light on plant-growth.

"The light from an electric-lamp tower in Davenport, Io., falls full upon a flower-garden about one hundred feet away; and during the past summer the owner has observed that lilies which have usually bloomed only in the day have opened in the night, and that morning-glories have unclosed their blossoms as soon as the electric light fell on them."

The above item, which originally appeared in the *Democrat* of this city, and has gone the rounds of the press, has a substantial basis of fact. The 'Jenney' system of electric lighting was introduced into this city early this past spring, and across the street from the residence of Mr. Henry W. Kerker is situated one of its towers. This tower is 125 feet high, and contains five arc lights, each of 2,000 candle-power. During the past summer, Mr. Kerker's attention was attracted to the singular effect these lights produced upon some day-lilies blooming in his garden. These flowers closed as night came on, but, as soon as the electric lamps were started up, they re-opened, and while the lights were in operation continued in full bloom. As the street is about 80 feet wide, the lights were distant some 200 feet from the flowers. Other similar observations here are reported, but, as they are less accurately verified, I pass them for the present without special mention.

CHAS. E. PUTNAM.

Davenport, Io., Nov. 19.

### Milk-sickness.

This disease seems to have received but little attention from the medical fraternity, probably on account of the supposition that its ravages are circumscribed to the area within the confines of its origination; yet it is presumed that such is not the